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ABSTRACT

The Commission to Improve Minority Education (CIME) was established in 1990 to address problems hindering the education of ethnic minorities at community colleges. This report features the CIME action agenda for the national community college system for improving recruitment, retention and transfer rates of minority students. Part I features a prefatory message from the Commission, while part II includes a foreword from the Commission chair. Part III, "The Challenge that Words Alone Cannot Solve," is divided into five sections: (1) "The Nation's Community Colleges: Shouldering the Challenge," highlighting the role of the community colleges in providing access to education for minorities; (2) "Mandate for a Community College Action Agenda," detailing the foundations of the agenda in terms of the needs for improving minority opportunities; (3) "Making the Commitment: It's in Our Best Interest," describing the benefits of diversity for educational systems, public officials, and the business sector; (4) "In Support of Recommendations Made by Other National Organizations," acknowledging important statements on minority education by other organizations; and (5) "The Time for Community College Action is Now," stressing the importance of immediate action. Part IV presents the action agenda, providing recommendations at the national, state and college levels, and stressing five key elements: commitment, policy, information, leadership, and collaboration. Part V features appendixes providing descriptions of exemplary minority education programs at community colleges, a summary of testimony presented at CIME hearings, a cultural diversity self-assessment instrument for colleges, and a 33-item bibliography. Finally, part VI provides a list of CIME members, while part VII presents acknowledgements. (MAB)

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MAKING GOOD ON OUR PROMISES...

MOVING BEYOND RHETORIC TO ACTION

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A REPORT OF THE COMMISSION TO IMPROVE MINORITY EDUCATION

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Making Good on Our Promises . . .

Moving Beyond Rhetoric to Action

A Report of the AACC Commission to Improve Minority Education

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Making Good on our Promises . . . Moving Beyond Rhetoric to Action

"Education remains the vehicle for achieving the promises of American democracy and for preserving those ideals that make America great. The changes and services required by our changing demography and the participation of minorities will not be easy, but we should never lack the will to try. The very future of our nation depends on it; we must make good on our promises!"

Manuel J. Justiz, Harry S. Truman Lecture, 1990

"In the coming century, community colleges will have, as their most essential challenge, the obligation to serve a diversity of students while affirming community at the college . . .The face of America is changing."

Commission on the Future of Community Colleges,
Building Communities: A Vision for a New Century, 1988

"Community colleges are living emblems of hope. We say, give us your poor, your tired, your huddled masses, that we may mine the rich vein of their diversity, that we may help to develop their strengths, that we may encourage the discovery of their uniqueness within humanity. In order to be effective in our transmission of hope, we must be courageous enough to recognize that change is necessary. Business as usual won't do!"

Joshua L. Smith, "The Will to Change,"
Community College Journal, 1988

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Part I

PREFACE: A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION

THE COMMISSION TO IMPROVE MINORITY EDUCATION WAS established by the American Association of Community Colleges in 1990 in response to a deep, growing concern on the part of community college leaders across the country about the alarming range of problems that hinder the education of ethnic minority* students at the nation's two-year colleges.

The Commission has focused its attention on the following challenges:

- Improving recruitment, retention, and academic success rates for African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students in community colleges.
- Increasing the number of staff from these ethnic groups to serve in professional positions at community colleges.
- Increasing the number of students from these ethnic groups who transfer to four-year colleges or attain employment in fields that require technical or specialized training.
- Improving campus climate. In particular, attention was given to highly disturbing reports of hate crimes on community college campuses.

In addition to ongoing study and deliberation, the Commission has worked to accomplish its objectives through the following activities:

*For this Commission's report, the word "minority" refers to the following four major ethnic groups: African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander. The Commission considers the word inaccurate in that these groups constitute a majority in several states. However, given the fact that more appropriate terminology is not currently in usage, and to encourage the emergence of new, more acceptable language, the word is used with deliberate economy and much reluctance.

- Conducting the AACC/IBM Minority Student Success Awards program, a joint project of IBM and the American Association of Community Colleges.
- Conducting two series of national hearings on the improvement of campus climate and the education of ethnic minority students.
- Producing a national teleconference on strategies for improving the recruitment and retention of African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students.
- Serving in an advocacy role for ethnic minority education improvement at the federal level.

From their role in these activities, from their in-depth study of emerging demographic data, from the numerous reports and recommendations issued by other national bodies, and from their own life experiences overcoming daunting educational challenges, Commission members have come to one conclusion. The time for talk is over! The time to act was yesterday!

The nation's community colleges must take the necessary steps to make good on historical promises of access and opportunity at their institutions. They must move beyond rhetoric to an action agenda that will eliminate barriers inhibiting the success of ethnic minority students. The Commission, weary of words, offers an action agenda and calls upon its colleagues at community colleges across the country to embrace it.

Part II

FOREWORD

WILHELMINA R. DELCO

SEVEN YEARS TO A NEW CENTURY, AND WE HEAR TALK ALL AROUND us about goals for the year 2000: goals for industry, goals for schools, and goals for colleges.

There is much talk, some action, but deep fear about all the problems our society is experiencing—recession, drug abuse, homelessness, low school achievement, dropouts, shrinking budgets, racial violence. Sometimes it even seems that we are moving backwards.

Why, then, one more report—and why now? Because we believe that the nation's community colleges are in a unique position to address the needs of our nation. Today the community college is one of the few places where all people in the community can bridge the artificial barriers of race, religion, class, and language that keep us separated elsewhere.

If our nation is to live up to its ideals, we must act even when resources are meager. If our nation is to remain competitive economically we can no longer afford the luxury of wasting the talents of large segments of our people because they look different, sound different, and worship in a different way. In theory, we exemplify the phrase "e pluribus unum"—from many, one. In reality, we exclude millions from the rewards of full membership in our society. We cannot tolerate this situation.

This report is designed to be an action document. The Commission hopes it will become worn with use. Only commitment by our institutions can ensure that. The time for action was yesterday!

Wilhelmina R. Delco is chair of the AACC Commission to Improve Minority Education.

Part III

THE CHALLENGE THAT WORDS ALONE CANNOT SOLVE

THROUGHOUT THIS COUNTRY THERE IS WIDESPREAD CONCERN ABOUT the range of problems that surround the education of the four major ethnic minority groups. Calls are heard from all quarters that attention must be paid to the dramatic demographic changes our nation is undergoing and to the ramifications these changes have for the way we educate. In the last decade, we have witnessed a proliferation of initiatives—papers, studies, reports, books, commissions, and special offices—all created to address the serious challenge of meeting the educational needs of African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander populations.

Between 1988 and 1991 alone, a plethora of publications on this subject have deftly articulated the problems facing the country. Some have addressed all aspects of education; others have focused on elementary, secondary, or higher education. Most have offered recommendations. Only a few set out a range of strategies. Taken as a whole, these reports evidence a pronounced sense of urgency, but have led to little in the way of action.

The sponsors of these reports recognize the severity of the problem and articulate it persuasively, often in eloquent, impassioned terms. A genuine consensus has emerged in two overarching areas about: 1) the important role of higher education institutions; and 2) the need for involvement by a full spectrum of our nation's leaders:

- The nation's community colleges and four-year institutions of higher education must renew and strengthen their efforts to increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation of African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian/Pacific

Islanders. Schools must also create a campus climate that nurtures these students and encourages them to succeed.

- The nation's leadership in education, business, public policy, media, civic, and service organizations, as well as in ethnic communities, must acknowledge that higher education cannot meet this challenge alone. They must recognize their need to collaborate, coordinate, and cooperate on a full range of solutions needed to improve the education of ethnic and racial minorities. They must also commit themselves to action.

Yet, in 1993, after a decade of consciousness raising and cajoling, both these recommendations are as relevant and nearly as unfulfilled as when they were first put forth some ten years ago. The problems of inequity in education remain with us, and in many respects have deepened.

While the 1990 U.S. Census reports that the African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander populations have greatly increased over the past ten years, and the pool of high school graduates for these groups has grown substantially, college attendance rates for the four major ethnic groups remain disproportionately low. This predicament is thoroughly documented in many recently released reports (See Appendix D). Worthy of repeating here, however, are several key trends. These trends reinforce how vitally urgent it is that we heed the immediate reality: it is no longer an interesting hypothesis—it is now a fact that one-third of our nation is undereducated and underrepresented in our educational institutions:

1. In the last ten years, increased participation rates of African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian/Pacific Islanders in higher education have slowed and often suffered reversals.
2. Disproportionate numbers of minority students are lost at each level of schooling—pre-school, elementary, secondary, high school, college, and graduate school.
3. The retention of students from the four major ethnic groups continues to be of significant concern, and these students continue to complete their college degrees at rates far lower than their White counterparts.
4. African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian/Pacific Islanders continue to be substantially underrepresented in college faculties and administrations. They account for less

than 10 percent of the professional staff at higher education institutions throughout this country.

5. Fewer students from the four major ethnic groups are preparing for teaching careers. In the future, not only these students but all students will see fewer African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander teachers over the course of their schooling.

These trends could not be more ominous. As stated in *One Third of a Nation,* the 1988 report of the Commission on Minority Participation in Education and American Life, "a college education has been a large part of the American dream, and, for many individuals and families, a good measurement of progress toward its fulfillment. Participation in higher education also is an important barometer of well-being for the nation as a whole. A decline in educational attainment by any substantial population group is cause for deep concern."

The Nation's Community Colleges: Shouldering the Challenge

Nowhere is the challenge to improve the education of African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian/Pacific Islanders more acutely experienced than at the nation's community colleges.

Among ethnic minority undergraduate students, community colleges enroll 57 percent of American Indians, 59 percent of Hispanics, 45 percent of African Americans, and 44 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders.

The fact that, in 1990, community colleges enrolled large proportions of all ethnic students comes as no surprise. After all, it has been the historic mission of community colleges to bring egalitarianism and democracy to education. Through the actions of the Truman Commission in the 1940s, community colleges are mandated to provide all people with access to education beyond high school. We are reminded by 1990 Truman Lecturer Manuel Justiz that American community colleges shoulder most of the responsibility for educating the current wave of minorities aspiring to an enhanced standard of living through higher education. Because of this, any limitations placed on the open-door policy betray the community college's historic promise of educational opportunity for all.

Economic problems complicate this situation. Diminished federal and state funding levels for higher education are forcing two-year

and four-year public colleges to increase their tuition rates. Some four-year colleges are also placing limits on their enrollments. And in some cases, for the first time ever, community colleges are doing the same. These actions create new barriers to higher education for African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students. As four-year colleges are forced to restrict enrollments or raise tuition in response to economic conditions, more students, from all of society, will want to attend community colleges. Similarly, when recent high school graduates have difficulty finding full-time jobs, they will turn to two-year colleges for part-time enrollment. Also, unemployed workers will enroll in job training courses at community colleges.

Community college leaders are already disturbed by the negative impacts of overloading the community college system. They are particularly concerned that the preparation of ethnic students for transfer to four-year colleges will suffer. Also of great concern is the fact that 50 percent of entering community college students lack the basic skills to do credible academic work. Remediation efforts are certain to be endangered by over-enrollment.

Nevertheless, despite the nation's economic problems, improvements in educating the four major ethnic groups at the nation's community colleges must be made now. Community college leaders understand the situation and recognize that the capacity for change and the will to change reside in great measure within each institution.

Mandate for a Community College Action Agenda

The community college—the people's college—as its central mandate for the coming century, must continue to offer all students an open door, and reaffirm to minority students the promise of improvement through education. Without this opportunity, America will become a socially and economically divided nation. The spirit of community will be lost.

—Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, 1988

The mandate to improve the education of African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian/Pacific Islanders at community colleges has been emphatically articulated in *Building Communities,* the 1988 report of the AACC Commission on the Future of Community Colleges. The Futures Commission members agree that commu-

nity colleges are obligated to help ethnic students succeed in higher education. They realize that a "gorgeous mosaic" can only be realized if all members of society share in its economic rewards. The report focuses on the issue of retention, stating that if community colleges do not take steps to solve the drop-out problem, "minority students will continue to leave school at the current disturbing rate, an increasing proportion of our citizens will face the prospects of social and economic failure, and communities will languish." The report expresses great concern about the number of students who leave college before their program of study has been successfully completed, and cautions that "the community college must not just enroll more minority students but must also assure that they can complete successfully their courses of study." This caution stems in part from the fact that because they lack basic skills, many ethnic group students in community colleges are enrolled in remedial courses and are screened out of demanding technical and academic programs. As a result, these students are less likely to transfer.

In quite specific terms, the *Building Communities* report offers a set of recommendations to improve the education of the four major ethnic groups to be implemented by community colleges. These recommendations coincide with the specific areas that the AACC Commission to Improve Minority Education was created to address. The Commission considers the *Building Communities* recommendations relevant today:

Improving participation:

- The nation's community colleges should vigorously reaffirm equality of opportunity as an essential goal. Every college should dictate, with pride and conviction, its determination to serve all racial and ethnic groups.

Improving recruitment:

- Every college should develop an aggressive outreach plan for minority students. Specifically, each college should create an Early Identification Program with surrounding schools, focusing first on junior high school students. The emphasis of such a program should be on counseling, language proficiency, and the academic preparation of students, in order to increase the number of ethnic minority members who are adequately prepared for college.

Improving ethnic group retention:

- Community colleges must give more attention to student retention. Every college should develop a comprehensive First-Year Program with orientation for all full-time, part-time, and evening students. Such a program should include advising, an "early warning" system to identify at-risk students, plus career counseling and mentoring arrangements. The goal should be a 50 percent reduction by the year 2000 in the number of students who fail to complete the program in which they are enrolled.

Improving campus climate:

- Community colleges should break down separation based on race or ethnic backgrounds by encouraging greater intellectual and social contacts among students at the institution, thus bringing together those from different ethnic and racial backgrounds so that socialization and learning for all can be enriched.
- Foreign students should be used as campus resources for information about the language, culture, and religions of their country so their knowledge and perspective can enrich campus life.

Increasing minority faculty:

- The percentage of faculty members who are African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander should be increased. For this to be accomplished, future teachers should be identified from among ethnic minority students in high schools and community colleges. These students should be assigned mentors who encourage them to consider teaching. Future teachers also should be invited to serve as peer tutors and teacher's aides.
- Graduate fellowships should be available to minority students who plan to teach in community colleges.

Improving transfer rates:

- Community colleges should make a special commitment to increase the transfer rates among ethnic group students. The transfer rate to four-year institutions of African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students should be no less than it is for White students.

Making the Commitment: It's in Our Best Interest

The Commission to Improve Minority Education is convinced that the resolution of problems surrounding the education of the four major ethnic groups requires a myriad of initiatives undertaken collaboratively by all sectors and levels of our society. The Commission believes that if progress is made, the beneficiaries will be not only African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students, but also those very institutions that step forward to act. Nothing less than the future of our country is at stake. It is in each of our best interests—community colleges, and indeed education at all levels, public officials, and the business sector—to make the necessary commitment to improve the way in which ethnic minorities are educated in this country.

Community Colleges

It is in the best interest of community college chancellors and presidents to make a commitment to improve minority education.

- As diversity becomes an increasing part of each community's fabric, the commitment of chancellors and presidents to improve the education of African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students will enhance the credibility and effectiveness of their institutions.
- Community colleges have traditionally taken responsibility for new immigrants. Improving educational opportunities for major ethnic groups fulfills and reinforces the community college mission.
- Growth in each community's diverse populations will affect future tax bases and the membership of future community college boards. Financial and political support from the community's growing diverse populations will become increasingly important for chancellors, presidents, and their colleges. Therefore, the economic security and vitality of each college is at stake.

Community college boards must also make a commitment to improve minority education.

- America's economic future will be severely jeopardized unless the nation's community colleges successfully educate a much higher proportion of the four major ethnic groups. College

boards that establish the improvement of minority education as an unequivocal priority will be providing responsible leadership, not only in the best interest of their colleges and their communities, but also in the best interest of their country.

Improving minority education must be a priority of community college faculty.

- Making an investment in the education of African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students offers a professional opportunity for community college faculty. Not only will it enhance their teaching effectiveness and raise their professional stature in a changing society, but it also gives them the chance to participate in changing people's lives from lives of dependency to lives of productivity.
- Increasing the academic success of African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students translates directly into teaching positions. From a pragmatic viewpoint, faculty job security is at stake.

Educational Systems at All Levels

All sectors of education—elementary, secondary, four-year colleges and universities—need to work collaboratively with community colleges to enhance ethnic minority success.

- Information about access to community colleges and the opportunities of the open-door policy can be more effectively communicated at early ages to young African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian/Pacific Islanders in elementary school.
- Accurate information about earning community college credit during high school and special programs for community college minority students should be shared with high school students.
- Community colleges can provide an enhanced and growing source of educated, literate transfer students.
- Ethnic minority students at community colleges should be exposed to the transfer opportunities historically Black colleges offer.
- Community colleges should identify potential minority faculty candidates.

Public Officials

Public officials at local, state, and national levels must make a commitment to improving minority education.

- When public officials make a commitment, via public financial support, to the community college education of African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian/Pacific Islanders, they are providing their community and this country with the capacity for a trained, economically productive work force.
- When public officials make a commitment to the community college education of these four major ethnic groups, they are making possible the evolution of an educated, informed citizenry—the electorate upon which our democratic form of government depends.
- When public officials reduce support for minority education, the ramifications are ominous—more people trapped in the welfare system, overcrowding in jails, fewer able workers contributing to our country's increasingly tenuous social security system, and a diminished voting populace committed to the values of democracy.

The Business Sector

It is in the best interest of businesses and corporations to contribute to the development of a literate, competent work force—

- By investing in the community college education of African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian/Pacific Islanders, businesses and corporations are contributing to the development of a literate, competent work force—the workers they will need to run their companies in the years ahead.
- By making a commitment to improving the education of these four major ethnic groups, business and corporations are contributing toward preparing tomorrow's consumers—the growing population that will be buying the goods and services their companies will be selling.

In Support of Recommendations Made by Other National Organizations

After sifting through hundreds of recommendations presented in dozens of recent reports, many of which echo each other, the AACC

Commission to Improve Minority Education wishes to acknowledge and give special emphasis to the following statements. Each states the enormous dimensions of the overall problem and the critical need for a collaborative solution.

"Seven core strategies that, if followed, will lay the groundwork for success:

- We challenge America's institutions of higher learning to renew and strengthen their efforts to increase minority recruitment, retention, and graduation.
- We challenge national leaders to identify and implement policies to stimulate economic growth and restore national solvency.
- We challenge the nation's elected officials to lead efforts to assure minority advancement.
- We challenge private and voluntary organizations to initiate or expand already existing programs designed to increase minority participation and advancement.
- We challenge each major sector of our society to contribute to a new vision of affirmative action around which a broad national consensus can be formed.
- We challenge minority public officials, institutions, and voluntary organizations to expand their leadership roles.
- We challenge education leaders to improve coordination and cooperation among all levels and systems."

—*One Third of a Nation,* A Report of the Commission on Minority Participation in Education and American Life.

"We call upon institutional governing boards, regional accreditation bodies, states, and the nation to issue a clear public call for improved transfer, to inform students fully on transfer requirements, to acknowledge the importance of financial support, and to establish firm expectations of transfer success."

—*Setting the National Agenda: Academic Achievement and Transfer,* A Policy Statement and Background Paper About Transfer by the National Center for Academic Achievement and Transfer, American Council on Education.

> "Each state should develop a comprehensive approach to increasing the number and proportion of minority students who attend college and who graduate."
>
> —*Redefining the Possible: Achieving the National Education Goals,* National Governors Association.

The Time for Community College Action Is Now

The situation described above cannot be overstated. We face a crisis in the education of ethnic minorities. Metaphorically speaking, the situation has surpassed the "first-aid" stage —neither band-aids nor tourniquets will heal the hemorrhage of talent in our country. Efforts to improve the education of African American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander students will require dramatic repair procedures.

We must make good on our promises. It is time to move beyond rhetoric to action. The wheels of collaboration move slowly. While we recognize that we cannot accomplish all that needs to be done in isolation, the nation's community colleges cannot wait for partnerships to fall into place. They must take action on their own behalf and on behalf of their country, and they must act now!

Part IV

AN ACTION AGENDA FOR THE NATION'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

COMMUNITY COLLEGES ACROSS THE NATION ARE WORKING TO IMPROVE the education of minority students. Yet these efforts seem to be insufficient. The percentage of minority students who graduate increases slowly or in some cases declines despite the work of colleges (See table below).

In the long run, the health of the economy will hinge on the number of well-skilled people available to staff our factories, offices, and government. The demographic changes reported by the last national census already show that those ranks must be substantially supplied from the ranks of immigrants, women, and people of color.

More than any other set of institutions, community colleges are well-situated to reach out to new populations, to empower them with new skills, and to integrate them fully into the mainstream of American economic life. Not only should equity concerns motivate

Associate Degrees Awarded
(as a percentage of all degrees by ethnicity)

	1984–85	1989–90
African Americans	8.3	7.9
American Indians	0.7	0.8
Asians	2.3	3.0
Hispanics	4.5	4.9
Whites	82.7	82.1

*Source: National Center for Education Statistics

colleges, but the recognition of their own best interest should as well. By diversifying student bodies and staff, our colleges will ensure enrollment stability and growth, and will create the next generation of taxpayers who will support the colleges.

Increasing the college participation and achievement of minority students requires simultaneous action at the federal, state and local levels of government and at the national and local levels of professional associations. At the same time, schools, community agencies, colleges, and universities need to work together to link programs that will result in a greater yield from the resources available. The key ingredients for success at all of these levels are: commitment, policy, information, leadership, and collaboration.

Commitment: Persistence and action are the bywords. The leadership has to make—and encourage others to make—diversity values and goals a priority, and find ways to give support to the achievement of these goals. This includes keeping all members of the college community informed of relevant actions, the reasons for the actions, and the goals anticipated.

Policy: Written policies, including implementation goals, strategies, and measures must be in place at every level. These policies should address the recruitment, preparation, retention, and achievement of minority students, faculty, and staff. Policy implementation should be monitored and progress reported on a regular basis.

Information: Policy formulation and implementation depend on accessible, reliable information. Federal and state statistical data need to be more consistent and timely. Each campus should have a college database to support planning, development, implementation, and monitoring of diversity goals and policies.

Leadership: Those who have leadership responsibilities, whether a college trustee, state governor, academic dean, or director of a professional association, must make an unflagging commitment to equal opportunity for all persons, and keep the pressure on. They must lead by example and will often have to stand strong against charges of reverse discrimination.

Collaboration: In order to remove the financial, logistical, psychological, social, and cultural barriers to minority student achievement, many individuals and organizations must come together around common goals. For colleges to be more successful in the recruitment, retention, and graduation of minority students, and in the recruitment, retention, and advancement of minority faculty and staff, significantly more stu-

dents need to make their way successfully through each stage of education—from pre-kindergarten to graduate school.

These five components—commitment, policy, information, leadership, and collaboration—are critical to the success of an action agenda and must be present at the national, state, and local levels in order to achieve greater progress in the college participation and achievement of minority students. With this in mind, the Commission recommends the following agendas.

A National Agenda

The Board of Directors of AACC should:

- Work aggressively with all federal agencies providing education funds to encourage them to view community colleges as appropriate intermediaries to ensure attainment of the nation's educational goals for minorities. Programs already established by the National Science Foundation (NSF) provide a model.
- Ensure broad minority representation on all boards of directors of organizations relevant to the education and success of ethnic minority students, and on all committees—standing and ad hoc.
- Review all organizational policies and procedures to ensure that they promote diversity.
- Ensure that national and regional conferences showcase minority speakers and perspectives, particularly with respect to issues of vital concern to minority communities.
- Encourage colleges to publicize programs focused on minority access and achievement.
- Allocate resources to support initiatives that improve minority student success.
- Communicate with governors and state legislators through the National Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Education Commission of the States, and other relevant organizations, to gain their commitment to and support for programs that promote access and achievement by minority students.

A State Agenda

State governments should:

- Provide funding for initiatives for ethnic minority students while removing traditional barriers to existing and future initiatives.

- Recognize that minority students have needs that require special funds.
- Change state policies that have not worked to the benefit of minority students.
- Review policies on standardized tests to ensure that the tests do not impact minority students negatively.

State governing boards should:

- Develop and implement policy statements reaffirming commitment to minority student access and success. All policy statements should contain timetables and incentives for implementation.
- Require annual reports from colleges about minority student access, achievement, and retention for use in policy formation, budget development, and outcomes assessment.
- Require annual staff affirmative action reports from colleges for use in policy formation and budget development.
- Review and revise all state policies and practices to ensure that they promote minority student access and achievement.
- Create incentives for colleges to implement programs to improve minority recruitment, achievement, and retention.
- Establish joint programs with state boards of education to strengthen the preparation of minority students for college and to increase college participation rates among these students.

A College Agenda

Boards of trustees should:

- Adopt or reaffirm policy statements that place minority student recruitment, achievement, and retention among the highest priorities of the college or district.
- Develop and support initiatives to enhance the performance and success of minority students in the areas of mathematics, science, and other areas where these students are underrepresented.
- Adopt or reaffirm policy statements that place faculty and staff affirmative action among the highest priorities of the college or district.
- Hold administration, faculty, and staff accountable for implementing the policy statements through periodic performance audits.

- Provide ongoing public recognition of faculty, staff, students, and administrators who contribute to minority student access and goal achievement.
- Encourage the professional growth and leadership advancement of minority faculty, staff, and administrators through such strategies as internships (internal or external) and tuition reimbursement programs.
- Select presidents who have a record of improving minority students' achievement and a record of recruiting, retaining, and advancing minority faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Set higher institutional goals to benefit ethnic minorities and pave the way for institutions to serve the community more efficiently.
- Require regular reports on goals and achievements at the institution.
- Select presidents and high-level administrative staff who can act as mentors and role models in developing minorities in the pipeline.

Chief executive officers of colleges should:

- Exercise leadership in developing a campus climate conducive to diversity.
- Conduct institutional self-assessments concerning the recruitment and hiring of minorities.
- Conduct institutional self-assessments of all curriculum and materials to ensure inclusion of study about the languages, cultures, and contributions of people of color to the history and development of humankind.
- Establish computerized student information systems to facilitate institutional research and assessment of each academic program, with special emphasis on minority student recruitment, retention, and achievement.
- Provide faculty with the results of institutional research that will enhance program development and revision.
- Assure minority representation on all search committees.
- Establish links with the military to recruit students, faculty, staff, and administrators from among those being discharged.
- Expand library and materials collections with multicultural elements.
- Conduct workshops on multicultural issues for faculty, staff, and administration.

- Establish links with community groups by using them to assist in planning and conducting multicultural workshops.
- Employ minorities at all levels of the college organization.
- Recruit students from nontraditional settings in the community; arrange for transportation between minority communities and the campus.
- Enlist minority alumni to recruit new students and educate their colleges and communities about the challenges of diversity.

Students should:

- Commit to expending the time and energy necessary for academic success.
- View ALL fellow students as learning resources.
- Cultivate relationships with students and faculty from a broad range of ethnic groups.
- Use all human and physical resources of the campus to enhance one's education.
- Participate actively in all aspects of campus life.

Faculty should:

- Strive for a new level of partnership with faculty at four-year colleges and universities to overcome obstacles to transfer of credits, and to facilitate articulation agreements between the institutions.
- Develop partnerships with minorities from the business community to participate in the teaching and learning process.
- Implement transfer agreements with other institutions by designing individualized educational contracts with students to be monitored with computerized degree audit systems.
- Encourage minority students to share the richness and complexities of their cultures in instructional activities.
- Participate in the learning process with students by mutually exploring the diversity of minority groups.
- Actively encourage students to learn from each other across racial and cultural lines.
- Encourage minority students to seek careers in education in general and community colleges in particular to increase the number of minority faculty.
- Work in concert with students and administrators to establish goals and policies to enhance minority student achievement.

- Be a resource to students as they design personal educational programs that will ensure their success.
- Work closely with the administration to create a receptive environment for new minority faculty.
- Conduct classroom research to generate information that will help them effectively plan instruction and evaluate their own teaching.

Conclusion

Most of the action strategies listed above are not novel. Surely, some colleges are already conducting these activities. Sadly, however, some colleges are doing very little. Our nation is standing at a crossroads. With the end of the Cold War and a large agenda of unmet domestic needs, we must invest in our people to make each one of them productive. It is time to move with or without incentives from state funding sources. Education is the means by which we can end the hemorrhage of human potential and talent. While the nation focuses on reforming elementary and secondary education, the community college can be a partner in this effort. Community college chief executive officers are in the pivotal role for making our recommendations work. They will have to use all of their skills to move their institutions down paths they may have never taken. CEOs must be persuasive and conciliatory, bold and accommodating at the same time. Above all, CEOs must be prepared and willing to take unpopular steps if they are to increase minority participation and achievement. History will record their courage.

Part V

APPENDICES

THE MATERIALS INCLUDED IN THE APPENDICES OF THIS REPORT PROVIDE evidence of some of the activities that the Commission initiated while gathering information on ethnic minority students in community colleges.

In Appendix A summaries of projects for ethnic minority students at three community colleges are presented. These examples do not cover the broad spectrum of activities and programs being implemented across the nation. However, they do provide insight on the programs examined over the three-year period of the Commission's work.

Appendix A also highlights twenty-seven community colleges. These colleges participated in the 1991 AACC/IBM Minority Student Success Awards program to honor colleges with outstanding programs for ethnic minority students. IBM provided monetary awards for the winners of first, second, and third places in the program.

Appendix B publicizes some of the opinions expressed in testimonies presented at the Commission's hearings held at the AACC 1991 and 1992 conventions in Kansas City, MO, and Phoenix, AZ, respectively. The themes of the four hearings were "Improving Minority Education," "Campus Climate for Minorities," and "Minority Students Success—Action, Not Rhetoric." All of the opinions and feelings expressed at these sessions were considered as the Commission developed the report.

Appendix C is a cultural diversity self-awareness instrument that was developed by the Commission for assessing campus climate for all students—but especially for ethnic minority students.

Appendix D is a list of books, reports, and articles published since 1988 that concern minority education.

A. Selected Exemplary Minority Education Programs at Community Colleges

Exemplary minority education programs turn out to be effective education programs. A major source of specific information and critiques of such programs is the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD). Among the colleges exhibiting exemplary programs were the following:

DeAnza College, CA
Highland Community College, KS
Miami-Dade Community College, FL
Middlesex Community College, MA
Illinois Central College, IL
North Lake College, TX
Santa Barbara City College, CA

What follows are descriptions of three programs from the list above. The programs described are not only considered exemplary, but also have received awards for their distinction and success. The following descriptions were prepared by representatives from the colleges.

Miami-Dade Community College

Program Goals and Objectives

The goals of the Black Student Opportunity Program (BSOP) are to adequately prepare Black high school graduates for the pursuit and completion of a college education, and to provide these students with a financial head start in earning a college degree.

The objectives of the BSOP are:

- To increase the pool of well-prepared high school graduates, with special emphasis on targeting programs to serve low-income students.
- To increase the number of high school students aspiring to a college education via better course selection, mentor involvement, parental involvement, role modeling, and external exposure.
- To motivate a greater number of students enrolled in BSOP to enroll in college preparatory courses that develop strong information skills and thus a higher level of college readiness.

- To facilitate the progress of targeted high school participants to enable them to earn an associate of arts degree at Miami-Dade and to successfully transfer to a college or university for completion of a bachelor's degree.
- To improve the basic academic skills of participants as measured by standardized tests.
- To decrease the dropout rate.
- To assist BSOP students in financing their college education via the earnings formula and the transfer program between Miami-Dade Community College and other colleges and universities.

Santa Barbara City College

Program Goals and Objectives

The Transfer Achievement Program (TAP) is designed to increase the number of underrepresented students who transfer to four-year colleges and universities. While not all underrepresented students are "at risk," many of the students participating in this program would not likely transfer without assistance provided by TAP.

The major objectives of TAP are:

- To increase the number and proportion of underrepresented students who commit to transfer as an educational goal.
- To improve the rate at which underrepresented students apply for, receive acceptance to, and enroll in four-year institutions to a level at least at parity with the general student population.
- To increase high school, community college, and four-year institution involvement and collaboration in the delivery of pre-transfer outreach, support, and transition services.

DeAnza College

Program Goals and Objectives

The initial goal of A STARTING POINT Minority Transfer Program is to address the college's "abysmally" low minority transfer rate to four-year institutions.

The program goal set in May 1985 was to increase the rate of transfer by DeAnza students, particularly minority students, by at

least 10 percent by June 1987, which would mark the end of the first stage of the program.

While A STARTING POINT Minority Transfer Program remains true to its original intent to increase the transfer rate of underrepresented students, it has developed a broader philosophical base, utilizing strategies other than those originally conceptualized.

The program's purpose, as stated by the director of A STARTING POINT, is "to develop a meritorious pool of capable, energetic, and enlightened underrepresented minority students who intend to continue their education at baccalaureate degree-granting colleges and universities."

Program goals are:

- To acclimate participants to the college milieu.
- To teach participants to utilize student services.
- To provide participants with the information and opportunities to become fully involved in academic, campus, and community life.
- To provide participants with a "home base."
- To strengthen student academic achievement.
- To strengthen student self-confidence and self-esteem.
- To broaden student transfer options.
- To assist participants in exploring and defining career goals and options.
- To encourage students to consider advanced degrees.
- To orient parents of participants to DeAnza College and college demands in general.
- To increase faculty involvement with program participants and with program objectives.
- To augment relationships with baccalaureate degree-granting institutions, near and far.
- To develop an alumni program.

AACC/IBM Minority Student Success Award Winners

The following is a list of the colleges that participated in the 1991 AACC /IBM Minority Student Success Awards program.

*Arrowhead Community College Region, MN
Austin Community College, TX

*Bacone College, OK (3rd Place)
Blinn College, TX
*Borough of Manhattan Community College, NY (1st Place)
*Bronx Community College, NY
Brookdale Community College, NJ
Central Florida Community College, FL
*Chabot College, CA
*Charles Stewart Mott Community College, MI
Community College of Denver, CO
Community College of Philadelphia, PA
*Donnelly College, KS
Lake-Sumter Community College, FL
*Miami-Dade Community College, FL
*Mitchell Community College, NC
Morrisville Community College, NY
Okmulgee Technical Branch, OK
*Piedmont Virginia Community College, VA
Prince George's Community College, MD
*Pueblo Community College, CO (2nd Place)
*Santa Barbara City College, CA
South Mountain Community College, AZ
St. Augustine College, IL
St. Petersburg Junior College, FL
*Texas Southmost College, TX
University of Hawaii Community College System, HI

*These colleges received monetary and other awards.

The AACC Commission to Improve Minority Education chose the award winners on the basis of the following criteria:

- Implemented marketing and recruitment programs that increased the number of ethnic minority students enrolled at the college.
- Created a positive campus environment and learning climate to enhance and support success for ethnic minority students.
- Implemented a retention program that led to an increase in the number of ethnic minority students who completed certificates and associate degrees.

- Increased the number of ethnic minority students successfully transferring to four-year institutions.
- Increased the number of ethnic minority faculty and administrators to support ethnic minority student success.
- Implemented special programs and support services/activities to support the academic success of ethnic minority students.

B. Summary of Testimony Presented at Commission Hearings

The following is a summary of proceedings of AACC Commission to Improve Minority Education hearings held at AACC Conventions, April 13-16, 1991, in Kansas City, MO, and April 11-14, 1992, in Phoenix, AZ.

From El Paso Community College, TX, **Dennis Brown** presented information on the language proficiency transitional program designed to improve the educational/learning environment for over 3,000 language-deficient students at the college.

The transitional program provides the opportunity to acquire language competency, occupational training, and transfer education through three tracks:

- Dedication of learning time entirely to language mastery while delaying the pursuit of college coursework until language proficiency is achieved.
- Concurrent enrollment in language training and college-level coursework, consistent with the student's level of language proficiency.
- Participation in an English for Special Purposes Programs (ESPP) course option that serves to expedite training in a specialized field, such as computer-based occupation, child development, and emergency medical technology.

Content-based instruction and ESPP are recommended for language-deficient students by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. In addition to providing the student with several curriculum options, arrangements are made for the student to receive counseling and participate in career exploration activities.

The success of the language program is evidenced in the fact that 10 percent of the graduates in spring 1990 had first entered the college as language-deficient students.

A second issue relating to the transitional language program but much broader in its impact on ethnic minority students is federal legislation on Ability-to-Benefit testing. This legislation requires those students who wish to enter college but do not have a high school diploma or the GED certificate to pass a written test that has been approved by the U.S. Department of Education. This legislation has grave implications for ethnic minority students.

First, minority students traditionally have not done well on standardized tests. This level of performance has been attributed to such factors as language barriers and socio-economic status. Secondly, the success of a single measure, in this case, a test, to determine admission to higher education has not been validated as an appropriate means of selection of candidates for matriculation to college. Thirdly, in the case of minority students, this legislation closes a heretofore viable avenue, community colleges, for gaining both academic skills for the associate and bachelor's degree, and for vocational/job training. Clearly, this legislation is going to affect the open-door policy of community colleges, but moreover will reduce access for many ethnic minority and other at-risk groups of students.

Evelyn B. Whitaker, professor of human services and student development, New York City Technical College, testified that in 1989 the National Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA) assessed trends related to the access, retention, and graduation rates of African Americans in the educational pipeline. NCBAA urged AACC to develop policies, programs, and projects that would ensure that community colleges would be more effective in meeting the changing demands placed upon them relating to the needs of growing minority populations. NCBAA presented a rationale and strategies for change. Issues fell into four major categories—governmental issues, teaching environment, teaching and learning, and institutional effectiveness. AACC set out to "celebrate diversity" among racially and culturally different groups, at the same time stressing integration to fully develop the culturally different human resources to strengthen the competitiveness of the work force. At the same time, the U.S. Secretary of Education took action that served to undermine the basic goals of diversity. Specifically, the U.S. Secretary of Education remanded the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's petition for recognition as a regional accrediting body back to the National Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Eligibility. The secretary requested that the Advisory Committee examine whether the commission has applied its diversity standards so as to infringe upon traditional institutional autonomy.

The secretary's action stemmed from a decision by the commission to highlight diversity as one of the specific criteria to be used in evaluating institutions for accreditation. This evaluation is based upon progress made by colleges and universities in achieving goals

that the institutions themselves select. Thus, the commission was careful to assure that no institution would be confronted with externally selected or imposed objectives. The commission's position on diversity spurs institutional introspection on the movement toward diversity in students, faculty, administrative staff, and curriculum.

The action taken by the U.S. Secretary of Education has broad implications. First, it places institutions of higher education in conflict with national trends in which cultural diversity is viewed as an important agenda item for higher education. Second, it places the federal government in the position of influencing educational practices—a practice which is contrary to existing federal statute.

The National Council on Black American Affairs found that the position of the U.S. Secretary of Education on the issue of diversity and the recent action taken with regard to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education impeded progress towards institutional responsiveness to the diverse populations they serve.

Rosemary Gillett-Karam, University of Texas at Austin, testified on campus climate for ethnic minorities. She stated that campus climate embraces the culture, habits, decisions, practices, and policies that make up campus life. It is the sum total of the daily environment and is central to the comfort factor that minority students, staff, faculty, and administrators experience on campus. Students and other members of the campus community who feel unwelcome or alienated from the mainstream campus life are unlikely to remain. If they do remain, they are unlikely to succeed. The culture or climate of an organization cannot be quantified or legislated. It is shaped by tradition, values, and attitudes—many of which are inexpressible. Thus, changing the campus climate can be a difficult and elusive task. However, because the climate is so central to all other efforts to improve minority success, it is both the point of departure and the culmination of all other efforts. As a tool of analysis, culture research illuminates individual, group, and institutional behavior by:

- Demonstrating observed behavioral regularities of persons' interaction, language, and rituals.
- Uncovering the norms that evolve in a particular society or setting.
- Revealing the dominant values espoused by an organization.
- Examining the philosophy that guides an organization's policy toward its constituent groups.

- Articulating the "rules of the game" for getting along in the organization.
- Ascertaining the feeling or climate that is conveyed in an organization by the physical layout and the way in which its members interact with outsiders.

An inhospitable campus environment can be overt and noticeable or quite subtle. Minority students often feel conspicuous and isolated from the mainstream. Many would say they feel marginal to predominantly White student bodies and their prevailing cultures. Moreover, minority student cohesiveness or gatherings are still perceived as threatening, hostile, or separatist by Whites.

Strategies for successfully meeting the needs of the modern community college that pre-suppose and assume the condition of egalitarianism and open access are presented here.

- Leaders must recognize campus climate as an issue and set the tone and pace for efforts to recruit and retain minority students, faculty, and administrators; they must recognize that the issue concerns everyone on campus; and they must provide education and training in the form of workshops, symposia, and other activities in order to cultivate pluralism in cultural and extracurricular activities.
- Individual differences among institutions must be recognized. Consideration should be given to external and internal environments.
- Leadership should come from the top. The goals, purpose, and ultimate planning for redirection emanates from the office of the CEO; moreover, commitment from the leadership, clarity around goals, and enthusiasm for constructive change guide the institution and its constituent groups. Communicating minority concerns freely and openly to constituent groups is a fundamental goal.
- Representative groups and constituents must be organized to discuss, confront, and raise issues around campus culture, the climate weathervane, and how one (individual and/or groups) specifically works to achieve cultural diversity and pluralism on campus.
- Offer guideline strategies. Constituent college groups should work toward goals to be modified for individual campus needs.

- Develop criteria for evaluating campus climate. Develop the antenna to be used in evaluating applications for faculty and staff positions, and in performance evaluations of faculty.
- Reward and recognize individuals and organizational units. Celebrate exceptional progress in creating a positive climate for minority concerns.

Margot Perez-Green of Austin Community College, TX, testified on the success of the Minority Student Success Office, which was established in the 1990-91 academic year. The Success program was designed to increase the matriculation of African American and Hispanic students, to increase retention of these students, and to provide the necessary information to encourage transfer, graduation, and a smooth transition to four-year colleges and universities.

The program led to the development of a student mentor program in which Austin Community College students volunteered to work with elementary school-age children in their classrooms, thus building self-confidence in the college students while providing role models for the elementary school students.

In addition to the student programs, the office sponsors faculty and staff programs by increasing cultural awareness and sensitivity among employees through training.

Douglas Eason of Mitchell Community College, NC, testified that the college had experienced several turbulent years of racial unrest. Before the institution became a state-supported community college it had been a private college since its establishment in 1856. It had been perceived, especially in the African American community, as a place where African Americans were not welcome. This age-old stigma did not help college/community relations.

Nonetheless, in August 1988 Mitchell Community College hired its first College Community Relations Director, whose major responsibilities included the handling of minority affairs and improving and maintaining a positive image for the college.

C. A Cultural Diversity Self-Assessment Instrument for Community Colleges

1. What are the critical links between past, present, and potential ethnic minority students at your college?
2. Are the expectations of your college the same for ethnic minority students as they are for all other groups of students? As the diversity of the student population changes, are services changing?
3. Does your college have a formal minority complaint system? Are minority students encouraged to discuss the climate of the college with administrators and faculty?
4. Do board members and key administrative personnel lead by example through their words, writing, actions, and personal commitment?
5. Are studies conducted on the causes of attrition of minority students? Are the factors that influence minority students' attrition fundamentally the same as, or different from, those affecting the majority?
6. Does your college have a student retention program in place? Are there specific numerical goals for attaining enrollment and retention that reflect the diversity of the work force, service area, ethnic minorities, women, EEOC guidelines, and diversity?
7. Do you have outreach programs that help prepare ethnic minority students for college coursework?
8. Do you develop "interest groups" for minority students linking them with representatives of fields they might enter after college, and do you arrange internships that could provide hands-on experience in relevant areas?
9. Is there an institutionwide attempt to ensure that academic advisers are sensitive to the emotional and academic needs and cultural backgrounds of ethnic minority students?
10. Are there support service courses for which academic credit is awarded?
11. How much emphasis is placed on early freshman orientation and pre-registration counseling for minorities? Are the goals and objectives of these students discussed with the leader of the college? Does a pre-college student and employee orientation for ethnic minorities set the tone for success?

12. Are better serving ethnic minority individuals and seeking institutionwide cultural diversity part of your institutional marketing plan?
13. Do you encourage a positive self-image and expect intellectual competitiveness from minorities?
14. How does the proportion of minorities in the student body relate to the proportion of minorities in the geographical region(s) from which the institution mainly draws its students?
15. How does the minority representation in faculty, administration, and support staff compare with the minority representation in the student body?
16. Do financially disadvantaged and ethnic minority students receive technical assistance and counseling in budgeting matters as a matter of policy?
17. Is the academic progress of ethnic minority students monitored and nurtured in the same way as other student groups?
18. Do you ensure that where language mastery remains a problem, English-as-a-Second-Language programs are available and utilized?
19. Are faculty encouraged to integrate issues of diversity into the curriculum?
20. Are stigmas attached to the students who participate in development programs? Is there an instructional effort to address this problem?

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Part VI

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Part VII

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